

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 OIC-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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O P 280523Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0437

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 18065

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SEATO, TH

SUBJ: DISSOLUTION OF SEATO

REF: A. BANGKOK 17456

B. STATE 196461

1. SUMMARY -- THE PWG HAS MET TO CONSIDER THE SEATO SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT OUTLINING PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF SEATO IN PREPARATION FOR THE FORTHCOMING SEATO COUNCIL MEETING. DISAGREEMENT HAS EMERGED ON THE TIMING OF THE PHASE-OUT AND ALSO ON THE NATURE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS COUNCIL REPS MIGHT PLACE BEFORE THE COUNCIL MINISTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION. THE RTG, UK AND U.S. SUPPORT AN ORDERLY PHASE-OUT AND TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS WHEREAS THE GOA, GOP AND NZ FAVOR A RAPID DISMANTLING AND A DECLARED DEADLINE FOR TERMINATION OF SEATO. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE PWG HAS MET TWICE TO DISCUSS THE SEATO

SECRETARIAT PAPER (BEING POUCHED DEPARTMENT) WHICH THE COUNCIL REPS REQUESTED ON 20 AUGUST PER REF A. THE DOCUMENT PROVIDES IN BROAD OUTLINE FORM A REASONABLE APPROACH TO PHASING DOWN SEATO AND IS A GOOD PRELIMINARY PLANNING PAPER. IF FOCUSES ON THE FOLLOWING MAJOR MATTERS IN DRAWING UP DETAILED PLANS FOR CONDUCTING A PHASING OUT OPERATION:

(A) THE GRADUAL WINDING DOWN OF NUMEROUS SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS, OF SUBSTANTIAL DIMENSIONS, NOW UNDER WAY IN BOTH REGIONAL MEMBER NATIONS;

(B) THE CESSATION BY STAGES OF CONSIDERABLE WORK IN PROGRESS IN THE SECURITY, INTELLIGENCE, TRAINING AND EXERCISE PLANNING FIELDS, AGAIN INVOLVING BOTH REGIONAL COUNTRIES;

(C) THE CONCLUSION OF ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE ROYAL THAI AND PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENTS AND POSSIBLY OTHER ENTITIES TO TAKE OVER SOME OF THE FUNCTIONS AND PROJECTS INVOLVED, AND THE TRANSFER OF RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION, ESPECIALLY TO THE HOST GOVERNMENT IN BANGKOK;

(C) THE MODALITIES FOR THE TURNOVER OF THE HEAD-QUARTERS BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION AND THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT, AND FOLLOWING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN VARIOUS INTERESTED PARTIES;

(E) THE DISPOSAL OF SUBSTANTIAL MOVABLE PHYSICAL ASSETS AND EQUIPMENT;

(F) THE LIQUIDATION OF THE ORGANIZATION'S FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS;

(G) THE TERMINATION OF LONG-STANDING ARRANGEMENTS WITH VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS WHICH STILL HAVE AFFILIATION;
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TIONS WITH SEATO AND BEAR SEATO'S NAME; AND

(H) LAST, BUT HARDLY LEAST, THE EQUITABLE HANDLING OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT, INVOLVING THE TERMINATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL STAFFS, OF WHOM SOME HAVE FAITHFULLY SERVED THE ORGANIZATION SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT TWENTY YEARS AGO.

3. THE SECRETARIAT SUGGESTS A PHASE-OUT TIME FRAME OF NOT LESS THAN TWO YEARS AND NOT MORE THAN THREE YEARS ADMITTING THAT THE DISMANTLING PROCESS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED MORE RAPIDLY BUT AT THE EXPENSE OF A SYSTEMATIC AND ORDERLY TURNOVER.

4. THE SECRETARIAT THEN RECOMMENDS THAT THE COUNCIL MINISTERS MAY WISH TO REAFFIRM THAT THE SEA COLLECTIVE DEFENSE TREATY (MANILA PACT), IN ACCORFANCE WITH ARTICLE TEN SHALL REMAIN IN FORCE INDEFINITELY; THAT THE COUNCIL DIRECT THE ORGANIZATION BE PHASED OUT WITHIN THE TWO TO THREE-YEAR TIME FRAME SUGGESTED ABOVE; AND, THAT THE COUNCIL MINISTERS INSTRUCT THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO PREPARE FOR COUNCIL REPS BY 31 JANUARY, 1976 A DETAILED PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH THESE OBJECTIVES.

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5. ALL PWG MEMBERS AGREE THAT THE MANILA PACT SHOULD REMAIN IN FORCE AND THAT A PLANNED PHASE-OUT

OF SEATO ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE ACHIEVED. DISAGREEMENT
ARISES OVER THE TIMING OF THE PHASE-OUT. THE AUSTRALIAN
MEMBERS PROPOSES JUNE 30, 1976 AS A TARGET DEADLINE
WHEREAS THE PHILIPPINE MEMBER RECOMMENDS PHASE-OUT
BY 1 OCTOBER, 1977 WITH THE NEXT BUDGET REDUCED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DRAWDOWN. HE ALSO INSISTS
HIS GOVERNMENT WISHES THE 24 SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING
TO BE THE FINAL ONE ALTHOUGH HE APPRECIATES THE
DISTINCTION OF HAVING CONSULTATIONS INSTEAD OF
MEETINGS UNDER ARTICLE FIVE. THE NEW ZEALAND MEMBER
IDENTIFIES HIMSELF WITH THESE VIEWS BUT MAINTAINS
A MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION WHILE PREFERRING AN EARLIER
RATHER THAN LATER TIME TABLE FOR DISSOLUTION.
THESE THREE INTER ALIA WANT THE COUNCIL MINISTERS
TO CONSIDER THE IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF MILITARY
EXERCISES; DISCONTINUATION OF THE INTELLIGENCE
COMMITTEE, AND SVDD UNDER SEATO AUSPICES.
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6. THE RTG, UK AND U.S. HAVE ARGUED FOR AN ORDERLY
DRAWDOWN PROVIDING ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFER
THOSE PROJECTS WHICH ARE USEFUL TO OTHER ENTITIES
AND HAVE OPPOSED ANY WRITE-IN OF TERMINATION DATE
ON THE COUNCIL MINISTER'S AGENDA. THE RTG MEMBER,
WHO TRAVELLED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI ON HIS
RECENT TRIPS TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, CLEARLY
STATED THAT CHATCHAI DOES NOT EQUATE "PHASE-OUT" TO MEAN
"DISMANTLING." HIS VIEW IS THAT THE RTG IS IN ACCORD WITH
THE SECGEN'S TIME FRAME AND WILL BE GUIDED BY THE TECHNICAL
DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE SECRETARIAT. RTG, UK AND U.S.
HAVE BEEN UNITED IN AGREEMENT WITH THE BROAD PROPOSALS
OF THE SECRETARIAT'S PRELIMINARY PAPER AND IN ACCORD
THAT THE TIME REMAINING BEFORE THE COUNCIL MEETING
DOES NOT ALLOW FOR PREPARATION OF DETAILED PROPOSALS.
THEY THEREFORE AGREE THAT THE COUNCIL MEMBERS SHOULD
DIRECT THE SECGEN TO PREPARE DETAILED PLANS BEFORE
THE END OF JANUARY 1976 AND, IN CONSULTATION WITH
COUNCIL REPS CONSIDER THE SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE
STEPS REQUIRED FOR A SYSTEMATIC PHASE-OUT. THEY
ALSO AGREE THAT ANY CESSATION OF PROGRAMS, EXERCISES
OF COMMITTEES SHOULD FLOW FROM THE SECGEN'S DETAILED
PLAN AND THAT THE COUNCIL MINISTERS SHOULD MAINLY
CONSIDER THE GENERAL PHASE-OUT, ACCEPTING IT IN PRINCIPLE,
AND LEAVING COUNCIL REPS TO MONITOR THE SECGEN'S
PROGRAM FOR ACHIEVING THE DESIRED RESULT.

7. COMMENT -- WE WILL CONTINUE TO ADHERE TO THE
INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN REF B AND TO SUPPORT
THE UK POSITION AND PARTICULARLY THE RTG WHICH

HAS REMAINED CONSISTENT AND FIRM. THE NEXT PWG MEETING WILL BE 1 SEPTEMBER AND THE FINAL COUNCIL REPS MEETING PRIOR TO THE NEW YORK MEETING IS SCHEDULED 10 SEPTEMBER. WE HOPE SOME OF THESE DIFFERENCES CAN BE RECONCILED BEFORE NEW YORK BUT SHORTNESS OF TIME AND GOA, NZ AND GOP POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES MIGHT MEAN SOME SPILLOVER AT COUNCIL MINISTER MEETING. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE THESE AND WOULD WELCOME ANY FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. THE UK EMBASSY IS INFORMING THEIR GOVERNMENT ALONG
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SIMILAR LINES.
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